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ABSTRACT

This paper is concerned with job satisfaction of men and women who occupy positions of leadership in local school systems. It is concerned with the effects of the ethnic composition of schools, both students and teachers, on the job satisfaction of individuals holding administrative positions. More specifically, it reports the findings of such a study among school administrators. The study was made to obtain evidence about the perceived job satisfaction of school administrators and to assess what relationships exist between job satisfaction and select organizational variables. Five need classes were researched: security, social, esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization. A 13-item Likert-type instrument was mailed to 1,000 public school administrators in California. Job satisfaction was defined as the difference between how much each need an administrator thinks is being satisfied and how much he thinks that he should be getting from his position. Stratification was applied by job level. Four job levels were controlled for principal, director, assistant principal, and superintendent. The ethnicity component was represented by respondents listing themselves as minority or nonminority and by percent of minority students and minority teachers in the schools. Findings reveal that at the principalship level, principals of schools with a 20 percent or more minority student enrollment enjoyed their positions less than did those with fewer minority students. (Author/MLF)

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THE JOB SATISFACTION OF ADMINISTRATORS WITHIN A MULTI-ETHNIC SETTING

BY

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BACKGR[illegible]

Emerging among social scientists is a new and useful construct for analyzing leadership behavior. The new construct, a contingency model, postulates that leadership effectiveness(Fielder, 1967, 1972) is contingent upon two interacting variables: (1) the personal qualifications and characteristics of the individual, and (2) the favorableness of the work situation. That is, the degree to which the work environment enhances the leader's power and influence. This model predicts that some leaders will, perform well under one condition while others will do a better job under other conditions. That is, given differences in personality and leadership style, different administrators should be able to create varying amounts of power and influence in a given situation. It seems fair, then, to assume that personal characteristics of administrators such as race and ethnicity might hamper or enhance one's ability to generate power and influence in certain situations. In addition, the racial and ethnic makeup of the student body and the teaching staff might tend to influence one's ability to generate additional power and influence.

The next question is, how does one determine when an administrator is advancing or losing his or her power base? The assumption is that we may answer this question by assessing the degree to which the administrator is satisfied with his position. What is the basis for such an assumption? Studies (Porter, 1966; Brown, 1970) over the last decade, among administrators, are consistent in concluding that job satisfaction is directly related to the degree of power and influence an administrator is able to generate in that position; that is, the more power and influence the happier. This is also true of school administrators(Brown, 1970). Therefore, the degree to which an administrator is satisfied with his job is probably a good indicator of his ability to generate power and influence in that position. For example, if a black or white administrator, in a racially mixed school is unhappy, it is due to his inability to generate sufficient power and influence in that situation.

This paper is concerned with job satisfaction of men and women who occupy positions of leadership in local school systems. It is concerned with the affects of the ethnic composition of schools, both students and teachers, on the job satisfaction of individuals holding administrative positions. More specifically, I will report the findings of such a study among school administrators.

It is universally assumed (Jencks, 1972, p. 176) that every individual desires a high status position over a lower one. A high status position is sought as an end in itself, and as a means of achieving other desirable goals such as prestige, power, and money. Studies on job satisfaction among administrators(Brown, 1970; Edel, 1966; El Salmi and Cummings, 1968; Haire, et al, 1964; Ivancevich, 1969; Johnson and Marcrum, 1968; Miller, 1966, Porter, 1961; and Porter and Mitchell, 1967) consistently conclude that job satisfaction is related to their job level or position. Other studies (Dowd, 1972, p. 14) have shown that one's ability to exercise power leads to satisfaction. Thus, power derived from a status position is preferred to an ad hoc position or temporary power on loan from a higher status individual.

Societies (old and new) have found it necessary to arrange positions available to individual members in a hierarchy. Generally, these positions, hierarchically arranged. represents relatively positions of power from lowest to the highest. It is argued that structure is needed and desirable in order to motivate individuals to achieve their highest potential or maximize organizational output. However, there are variations in the relative power of positions within the same organization and from one organization to the next. There are exceptions to this rule. In some organizations the most powerful individual may not occupy the top position on the organizational chart. For example, an outstanding physician on a hospital staff may hold more relative power than the hospital's director or, a distinguished university professor may hold more relative power than the university president. Nevertheless, within local school systems, like most business and industries, relative power positions, are adequately represented by the organizational chart. Starting from the top of the organizational chart for administrators, we find the: superintendents,assistant superintendents, directors and supervisors, and principals. However, in terms of job satisfaction, the educational administration hierarchy consist of only two levels, (Brown, 1970) a high level consisting of assistant-superintendent and superintendend and lower level consisting of directors and principals, not four.

In a homogenous society consisting mainly of individuals of one race, one religion, and so forth one would be content with an analysis of the effects of such factors as job level, type of community, one's age, school size, and maybe sex on job satisfaction. But with racial and ethnic unrest

an almost constant mainstay in urban schools it seems advisable at this time to analyze racial and ethnic factors as they relate to job satisfaction. Do white school administrators find greater or less satisfaction in administering a white school, a black school, or a racially mixed school? How are white administrators affected by the ethnic make-up of their staff? Do minority administrators receive greater satisfaction from their positions than whites?

One would assume, given racial and ethnic discrimination in this area, that a minority person appointed to an administrative position would perceive himself or herself as being over qualified for the position, compared to his white counterpart; and therefore, would be less satisfied with the position. If he is not less satisfied; it may be because he is comparing himself to relevant others (Fielder, 1972), qualified minority members who are without an administrative position or occupying lower status positions. In personal terms, minorities should be given an opportunity to exercise legitimate power through high status positions for greater personal satisfaction. On the other hand, individuals in hierarchial structured organizations, defined in terms of power, in general, are highly motivated (Cohn, 1958) to achieve success if they perceive their chances of moving upward as being highly favorable. If upward mobility is perceived as being not very good, the organization is viewed in a negative manner.

Careers in Educational Administration

What are school administrators like? It may be helpful, at this point, if we could take a quick overview of educational administration as a career. Or, how does one get to the top of the ladder, to the superintendency. The major positions in local school systems are teacher, counselor, principal, director or assistant-superintendent, and superintendent. Occupational specialization (Carlson, 1972, p. 8) in local schools is meager. To be a superintendent one must have been a classroom teacher and, in most instances, a white male; even though a majority of the classroom teachers, the pool from which superintendents are drawn, are females. Thus, superintendents are selected from a small percentage of the teaching force. For those males who persevere, stand a good chance of becoming a superintendent.

The usual path to the superintendency is the teacher-principal-superintendent for small school districts; and teacher-principal-director-(assistant-superintendent) - superintendent for large districts. However, the elementary

school principalship is viewed a dead end for those seeking a superintendency (Carlson, 1972, p. 9). It is also necessary and critical that one join the club or secure a sponsor, if he is desirous of moving up the administration ladder.

The average age of a superintendent is about 50 years (Carlson, 1972, p. 10); and the most prestigious superintendencies are held by those who have occupied a greater number of different superintendencies, not those with the most experience in that position(Carlson, 1962, p. 13). The superintendent, in addition to being male caucasion, is more than likely to have been born and reared in a rural or small town, and come from lower socio-economic levels (in comparison to other professionals). In regard to formal education, a national sample (Carlson, 1972, p. 26) of superintendents revealed that 13 percent have earned doctorates, 83 percent had a master's degree, and 4 percent with less education. A superintendent must be married. The divorce rate among superintendents is the lowest among any professional group (Carlson, 1972, p. 27). Bachelors, widowers, or divorcees are not likely to ascent to the superintendency. Also superintendents are overrepresented by the Protestant faiths and the Republican Party (Carlson, 1972, p. 27).

Minority Administrators

It appears that black educators could meet most of the requirements for the superintendency, except for race, and membership in the Republican Party. However, race is slowly giving way as a barrier to the superintendency, at least in a few urban areas. Unfortunately, you still must be a male. Other minorities, however, may not qualify under the protestant faith criterion. As for being a bachelor, widower, or a divorcee, I am not certain that black male educators are at a disadvantage, when compared to the standard superintencency model.

The trend in the United States today, if one can spot one, is to reserve a number two or number three position in central administration for a black. Recently, in a suburban New York City school district, the superintendent resigned with little notice. The Board of Education immediately named a white central office administrator as acting superintendent. The acting superintendent was an individual without the necessary union card, a doctorate, and an average performance record. On the same staff was a black, with the union card, and several recommendations from the same Board for outstanding service. When

black and white members of the community protested this action to this very liberal board, board members admitted, privately, that they acted without ever thinking that a black would be superintendent. It was just taken for granted that a white would be superintendent and there would be a black assistant superintendent. In middle management, however, there are many blacks in assistant-to positions, and directors of special state and federal programs. Even fewer are occupying regular positions on the organizational chart. There will probably be a mad scramble by urban school boards and superintendents under pressure from the black community to find regular positions for blacks, as the federal government continues to cut back on support for education. At the principalship level, blacks are usually assigned to black or racially mixed schools, but rarely an all white one. At this level, blacks may find that suburban school districts, may be a viable place to seek employment. However, in the suburbs, the superintendency, for a black person may be several galaxies away.

Race, Ethnicity, and Job Satisfaction

If we set aside the question of individual administrators being racists, then why should race and ethnicity affect one's job satisfaction? Since leadership is essentially a relationship involving power and influence, a leadership position may be defined in terms of how much power and influence the situation, in this case the school environment, gives the leader (Fielder, 1972, p. 454). The power and influence of school administrators will be enhanced: (Fielder, 1972, p.454): If they can establish a good relationship with students, teachers, and parents; if their assignments are highly structured, as opposed to being vague, nebulous, and unstructured; and, if their position allows them to reward and punish, hire and fire. Therefore, leadership effectiveness is contingent upon the leaders qualifications and the favorableness (Fielder, 1972, p. 454) of the situation. That is, the degree to which the job situation itself enhances the leader's power and influence. Since administrative assignments in local school systems are usually vague, nebulous, and unstructured, and the ability to reward and punish is almost nil; only one option is left to increase one's influence and thus, the favorableness of the situation. The one option left to increase one's power and influence is to create a positive relationship with teachers, students and parents. Therefore, it seems fair to assume that the racial and ethnic characteristics of the leader and/or the

school's membership, both students and teacher, could alter the favorableness of the situation; and thereby, decreasing the power position of the leader and satisfaction derived from the position. A favorable situation for a black school administrator may be just the opposite for a white administrator and vice versa.

The Study

Purpose. The purpose of this study was to obtain evidence about the perceived job satisfaction of school administrators and to assess what relationships exist between job satisfaction and select organizational variables. Five need classes were researched: security, social, esteem, autonomy, and self-actualization (Porter, 1961, 1962). The main hypothesis states that high level administrators receive greater satisfaction from their positions than lower level administrators.

Instrument and Method. Assessment of job satisfaction was made by utilizing the University of California Management Position Questionnaire (Porter, 1961), a 13 item Likert-type instrument. A total of 1,000 questionnaires were mailed to public school administrators in California. Job satisfaction was defined as the difference between how much each need an administrator thinks is being satisfied and how much he thinks that he should be getting from his position. Stratification was applied by job level. Four job levels were controlled for: principal, director, assistant-principal, and superintendent.

Definition of Variables

Ethnic Background: the ethnicity component was represented by respondents listing themselves as minority or non-minority.

Minority Student Concentration: minority student composition was represented by the percentage of minority students within a school or district. Two categories were employed: (1) schools or districts with fewer than 20% minorities; and (2) those with more. These categories also defined integrated and segregated schools.

Minority Teacher Composition: Schools were separated into two categories: those with 10% or more minority faculty representation; and those with less. It was anticipated that minority faculty representation would be less than for minority students. This assumption accounts for the different cut-off points.

Findings and Conclusions: How are administrators affected by the minority or ethnic problem? It was felt that administrators faced with this problem, whether real or imaginary, would consider themselves less well-off than those without the problem. This is complicated by the ethnic identification of the administrator. Ethnic identification was examined and found not to affect one's job satisfaction. Because it was expected that minority administrators would be found primarily in middle and lower level positions, minority principals were compared with non-minority principals; and likewise middle management types with the same. It was not possible to compare minority superintendents and assistants-superintendents to their white counterparts, because of the lack of a sufficient sample.

The minority student composition did not affect central office administrators job satisfaction(directors, assistant superintendents, and superintendents); nor did the minority teacher composition of the district or individual schools. Nevertheless, at the principalship level, principals of schools with a 20% or more minority student enrollment enjoyed their positions less than those with fewer minority students.

A comparison of three principalship categories - (elementary, junior high, and secondary) reveal that: (1) the elementary and junior high school principals with a sizable minority student enrollment received less satisfaction from their positions than those with fewer minority students. While the minority student composition did not make a difference with senior high school principals, a closer look revealed that junior high school principals with few or no minority students received the greatest satisfaction from his position; while the elementary school principal with a sizable minority student enrollment received the least.

Table I

ANOVA: Need Satisfaction

Administrative Position (s)	Source of Variation	df	Significance Test*
Central Office Personnel	Minority Student Composition	1/444	NS
Principals	Type of Principal-ship: elem., J.H.S., H.S.	2/138	NS
Principals	Minority Student Composition	1/138	.0067*
Principals and Directors	Ethnicity	1/56	NS
Principals	Minority Teachers in Segregated Schools	1/30	NS
Principals	Minority Teachers in Integrated Schools	1/45	NS
Principals	Minority Teachers	1/81	NS

*P $<$ 05, level of significance

Table II

Need Satisfaction: Mean Scores of Principals Serving Two Categories of Student Population

(N=144)

Principals	Less Than 20% Minority		Greater Than 20% Minority	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Elementary	66.17	7.34	60.92	12.44
Junior High	68.75	5.87	63.04	8.22
Senior High	63.71	9.10	62.75	7.40

Table III

ANOVA: Individual Need Classes
(Principals and Minority Students)

Need Class	Source of Variation	df	Significant Level*
Security	Minority Students	1/138	NS
Social	Minority Students	1/138	NS
Esteem	Minority Students	1/138	.0042
Autonomy	Minority Students	1/138	.0122
Self-actualization	Minority Students	1/138	.0267

*Significance at $P < .05$

Table IV

Means: Individual Need Classes
(Principals and Minority Students)

Mean Scores on:	Maximum Score	Cell**	Type of Principalship Elem.	J.H.S.	Senior High
Security Needs	6	1	4.67	5.17	4.87
		2	4.29	4.21	5.00
Social Needs	12	1	10.49	10.46	9.71
		2	10.00	10.08	10.50
Esteem Needs*	18	1	15.79	16.00	15.54
		2	14.50	15.04	14.42
Autonomy Needs*	24	1	20.08	21.67	19.25
		2	18.42	19.62	17.67
Self-actualization needs *	18	1	15.21	15.46	14.33
		2	13.71	14.08	14.17
Need Satisfaction*	78	1	66.17	68.75	63.71
		2	60.92	63.04	62.75

* Significance at $P < .05$

** Cell one represents the mean scores of principals in schools with less than 20 percent minority student population and group two represents more than 20 percent.

These findings suggest that the favorableness of leadership positions occupied by elementary and junior high school principals is adversely affected by a sizeable minority student enrollment. Since job satisfaction is highly correlated with one's relative degree of power and influence (Brown, 1970; Fielder, 1972) how may we explain this loss of influence via a sizeable minority student enrollment? What are some possible explanations? First, let's make the assumption that one loses situation favorableness if one loses respect and trust with members of his immediate work environment. That is, the loss of trust and respect among students, parents, and teachers.

At the junior high school level a major concern would be discipline. With this age group, you are involved with the "fighting" years. A sizeable minority enrollment might increase the number of fights and discipline problems; and because of their age it becomes difficult to discipline students by kicking them out of school. Thus, such a situation might cause the principal to lose respect and trust among teachers, students, and parents. As a junior high school principal once related to me, as a high school teacher, "you don't have problems, junior high school students fight all the time". With this age group, the threat of school failure or a poor recommendation for college or a job, in order to curb unrest is probably not very helpful.

At the elementary school level, schools with a sizeable minority student population might be considered less favorable because of a high degree of parent-teacher interaction involved in working with children at this age group. While the principal may get along great with students, the constant interaction with minority parents over day-to-day student and school concerns might be more than a middle class oriented person would desire; and because the curriculum in elementary school is so general, the first line of defense against an irate parent is the principal. If the principal cannot defend his or her staff in such cases, he or she, may lose respect and trust among teachers. Since the ability to reward and punish elementary school teachers by a principal is nil, the situation favorableness becomes very poor. While the junior and senior high school principal receives requests to reward teachers with good letters of recommendation, for upward mobility, an elementary school principal receives few of such requests. The elementary school teaching position is considered a dead end, for upward mobility. Elementary school teachers rarely aspire to become junior high or senior high school teachers or administrators, both are considered to be of a higher status.

On the other hand, junior or senior high school teachers in greater numbers tend to aspire to higher positions and thus, will cause less trouble in similar situations. After all, upward mobility requires a sponsor, and the principal is a likely sponsor.

The high school principal does not view the enrollment of a sizeable minority students as creating a less favorable situation. At the high school level, parent-teacher interaction is less and while student problems may tend to be more controversial, the number of fights and discipline problems are less than might be expected at the junior high school level. Therefore, because of the age group and greater specialization in subject matter, student discipline and parent-staff interaction is less. In addition, the administration retains the power to reward and punish, both teachers and students. And as suggested, the individual with the greatest amount of power and influence generally views his situation as being more favorable.

For the present, local public school systems may help elementary and junior high school principals to receive greater satisfaction from their jobs through in-service training. It appears that elementary and junior high school teachers and administrators working with minority students should be taught how to better interact with minority students and parents. This may also be a need of high school personnel, but to a lesser degree. Since ethnicity is not a factor in job satisfaction, this recommendation applies equally to white and black administrators. A person without power and influence, regardless of race, is not likely to feel good about his situation. On the other hand, school systems, through personal interviews, could attempt to recruit principals that tend to view the situation with a high degree of favorableness. If this strategy is used, the appointment of principals to schools with a sizeable minority enrollment might tend to favor the minority candidate. It has been suggested (Fielder, 1972, p. 454) that experience tends to give greater structure to what seems like an unstructured situation. For administrators, a structured situation is the most desirable. However, it is doubtful that a good experienced principal will consider a horizontal or downward move, to lower status position. Thus, the best option for a school district would be seek re-training for their principals.

This study is limited in that it considers only the views of individual administrators. While this is very important and necessary, students, teachers, and parent views should be sought. While a white administrator in a black school may be able to relate quite well with minority students and parents and perceive his situation with great favorableness, the black community might view the situation with great dissatisfaction. The reverse could happen in the case of a black principal in a white school. Hopefully, incidents of this nature will prove to be the exception.

There is just one note of caution about all of this. With a minority school (black, brown, or yellow), it would be a gross error to assume that all minorities desire a minority administrator. Quite the contrary, some minority communities may view such an appointment as an insult. After all, many minorities still believe that anything white is superior. Fortunately, most minority individuals and communities are fast developing a sense of racial and ethnic pride. Nevertheless, school boards and superintendents should be aware of this lingering poor self-image among minorities. Yet, on the other hand, too many white administrators are still exploiting those minorities with a negative self image of themselves. That is, in such a setting, an incompetent white administrator may continue indefinitely to receive an excellent rating. While on the other hand that same administrator in a white community will probably experience a short administrative career.

Finally, school administrators are drawn almost exclusively from classroom teachers; and there is a shortage of minority administrators. How then may more minority teachers be encouraged to seek administrative positions or simply to remain in the teaching profession? First, society must convince the minority teacher that upward mobility is possible, even without a sponsor. Efforts in this direction, however, is not likely to be very convincing unless minority teachers can see a fair number of minority administrators like himself (or herself) holding regular administrative positions, and being promoted.

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